The Field Museum

Natural News

Weekly Staff Newsletter
November 5, 1999

United Way Campaign kicks off

Speakers stress importance, significance of giving

More than 50 people attended yesterday's United Way Campaign Kickoff to hear about the work of United Way and to listen to special guests Derrick Phillips of the Illinois Center for Rehabilitation and Education and Sue Cannon, loaned executive from the Northern Trust.

Derrick Phillips, who has been deaf since birth and who lost his sight gradually due to retinitis pigmentosa until he became totally blind at 31, spoke about the importance of giving to the United Way. Agencies like the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, which was a central help to Phillips after he lost his sight, depend on the support they receive from United Way in order to help individuals with disabilities as they go to school, prepare themselves to live with a handicap, or to take on a new job. Phillips, whose new book is entitled *I'm Blind, So What?*, said that before he lost his sight he was blind to the needs of others, and he urged Museum staff to think about the difference their contribution could make in someone's life.

Sue Cannon has worked with the United Way Campaign for the past three years, and has helped The Field Museum with its employee drive for the past two. As a loaned executive, she spends six months each year working on behalf of United Way. Her salary is paid by the Northern Trust so that the United Way receives her expertise and enthusiasm free of charge. Cannon spoke about the history of the United Way and the community-based volunteer efforts which raise funds, distribute them, and monitor their use by more than 450 agencies throughout Chicagoland. United Way agencies serve more than 2.5 million people each year in the Chicago area, so every penny of the $100 million campaign goal is put to good use.

Employees will receive pledge forms and information about the United Way today with their paychecks. The Campaign Committee asks that pledge forms be turned in next Friday, November 12 to the committee members named in the pledge form materials. Our goal this year is to raise $10,000.

Please direct any questions you may have to Karsten Lawson, Campaign Committee chair, at ext. 7811.

Rodger Patience

FIELD NOTES

Week of November 8

Staff/Volunteer Events

Tae Bo class
- Monday, 5 p.m., Ground Floor East

Aerobics Class
- Tuesday, 5 p.m., Ground Floor East
- Thursday, 5 p.m., Ground Floor East

Green Sheet Meeting
- Wednesday, 3 p.m, Special Events

Noon Seminar
- Thursday, Zoology Classroom

United Way pledge forms due
- Friday

Public Events

Education Overnight
- Friday evening to Saturday

Chicago Humanities Festival X
- Saturday and Sunday

The **Natural News** is edited by Rodger Patience in the Development department. Call ext. 7286 or e-mail *patience* with stories, news, events, or any item of interest to the Museum community.

NEW!!
Deadline for each week's issue is now **Wednesday** at noon.
NEW!!

KUDOS

Eureka! We Did It!

The exhibition *Eureka! The Archimedes Palimpsest* opened to the public on Wednesday, November 3, and we would like to extend thanks to a number of museum staff whose quick responses, attention to detail, and follow through have resulted in a very successful opening.

Audio Visual: Mentee Teah
Computing Services: Jim Koeppl and Jack Chiu
Conservation: Cap Sease and Holly Lundberg
Education: Mary Ann Bloom
Engineering: Earl Duncan
Exhibits: Kent Peaslee, Eric Manabat, Danielle Kiefer, Bruce Heimbuch, Robert Hughes, Brian Dettmer, Jessica Newman, Matt Matcuk, Pam Gaible, David Mendez, Trigg Waller, Abe Bloom, John Petreikis, Lance Kirsch, Jeanelle de la Paz and Corrie Coughlin
Legal Counsel: Felisia Wesson
Library: Ben Williams
Museum Store: Julie Lockhart
Publications: Robert Vosper
Print Shop: Ed Czerwin
Website: Lori Breslauer and Allyson Meyer

And we would like to thank the following departments: **FP&O, Finance, Housekeeping, Institutional Advancement, Marketing & Public Relations,** and **Security.**

Submitted by **Robin Groesbeck** and **Abigail Sinwell**

MAPS charts a new course between schools, museums

On Friday, October 29, The Field Museum hosted the kick-off event for an innovative new partnership between the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the nine Museums in the Park. Through this initiative called *MAPS (Museums and Public Schools): A New Direction for Teaching Chicago's Children* over 2,500 teachers including 1,500 first year and 200 second year teachers were introduced to many exciting ways to incorporate museum resources into their classrooms. This couldn't have happened without the help and generosity of countless staff and volunteers throughout the Museum. Thank you to:

Beth Adams
Miriam Alleyne
Catharine Blair
Mary Ann Bloom
Eduarda Briseno
Joe Byrnes
Bob Cazy
Renee Chester
Mara Cosillo-Starr
Beth Crownover
Gabriele Da Silva
Kathleen Donofrio
Kathryn Eggers
Maykew Engberg
Kristen Fergus
Maria Fontana
John Frazier
Ron Hall
Vicki Halit
Jeff Hawkins and all of the Security Staff
Takeesha Holmes
Daisy Janeway
Raissa Jose
Jennifer Jungers
Erica Kelly
Danielle Kiefer
Johanna Krynytzky
Mark Larson
Elizabeth Levinson
Cora Mayo
Jennifer Mizak
Mary Ellen Munley

Lauren Niimi
Lisa Niziolek
Christian Nutall
Sergio Perales
Paula Ramos
Rita Rivera-Wyers
Bill Ryan
Jay Savage
Marianne Schenkew
Nancy Shuttleworth
Mae Simon
Beth Spencer
Melanie Spratford
Magnolin Stewart
Brittany Stull
Mentee Teah
Encarnacion Teruel
Jane Thain
John Vonkerens and all of the Housekeeping Staff
Tracy Walker and all of the Visitor Services Staff
Susan Webb
Diane White
Janet Young
The Museum Store
Corner Bakery
McDonald's

Submitted by Jordan Lungstrum

Throw that ballast overboard!

The Field Museum is currently replacing old ballast units throughout the building. Ballast serves to regulate incoming voltage as it comes into fluorescent lights and keeps the light from flickering. Our lights are of an older variety containing PCB ballast. The PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls) is actually a small part of the ballast (about 1/16th of the total weight) and serves to insulate the electrical components of the ballast which would get too hot without the insulation. We are replacing the older ballast units with much more efficient ones that don't contain PCBs, are Y2K compliant, and don't negatively effect computers and other equipment.

The old ballast units are being recycled in the following manner: 1) the unit is frozen to make the PCB easy to recover (it is sent to an incinerator), 2) the metal casings, copper wire, electrical connections are all sent out to have the metal recovered for future use. To date we have recycled 1,555 pounds of ballast. Facility Planning and Operations is also recycling light bulbs.

Submitted by Bill Stanley

Sierwald confirmed as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Arachnology*

Petra Sierwald (Zoology) recently returned from a weekend business meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Arachnological Society. The Executive Committee, consisting of elected and appointed officers, manages the Society's finances, which include annual student grants, and the Society's businesses, which are mainly the production of the *Journal of Arachnology* and the national annual scientific meetings.

At this year's business meeting Petra's appointment as editor-in-chief was confirmed. The journal has grown considerably both in reputation and in size over the past few years. The *Journal of Arachnology* made its international debut this year with the production of the Proceedings of the XIII International Arachnological Congress (held in 1998 at The Field Museum). A copy of the Proceedings is available in the Library. Petra and the associate editors were charged with spearheading the development of the journal into an international serial.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

New conservation research to be shared

The Chicago Area Conservation Group invites you to attend three 20-minute presentations highlighting current studies in conservation. The presentations will be held November 18 at 6 p.m. at The Chicago Historical Society.

Bonnie Rimer: Investigation of Fatty Acid Migration in Alizarin Crimson Oil Paint in Two Works By Frank Stella

Bonnie Rimer's research on this deterioration phenomenon in Frank Stella's paintings began while she was at Queen's University in Kingston. The degradation results in the development of a white crystalline growth on the painting surface. The crystals were theorized to result from the reaction of Stella's painting materials with certain environmental factors. Ms. Rimer characterized the crystals with instrumental analysis and developed an experiment to reproduce the effect on study samples. She continued her research on this topic at the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Art Institute of Chicago where currently she is a Mellon Fellow in paintings conservation.

Joel Thompson: An examination of Degraded Samoan Barkcloth from the Collection of the Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology, Harvard University

Joel Thompson's technical study of a small group of extremely deteriorated Samoan barkcloth items grew from a larger IMLS survey and treatment project at the Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology. Of the 250 Polynesian barkcloths she examined only those labeled Samoan were found to be extremely brittle, fragmented and to emit a sugary odor. Ms. Thompson used instrumental analysis, microchemical testing, artificial aging and visual examination techniques to assess the degradation and ascertain a reason for the deterioration. Her work was conducted largely at Buffalo State College and furthered at The Field Museum where she is fulfilling her third year internship.

M. Brigitte Yeh: John Taylor Arms' Use of Antique Papers

John Taylor Arms (1887-1953) was foremost among American etchers of the early 20th century and a consummate craftsman known for his meticulous renderings of architectural subjects. Brigitte Yeh's expertise of Arms stems from her survey of two, nearly complete collections of his work at the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress. The use of antique and handmade papers for prints by Arms and his contemporaries will be discussed as well as the artistic environment that fostered it. Ms. Yeh is an Andrew W. Mellon Fellow at the Art Institute of Chicago and a recent graduate of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

Service Recognition Ceremony

Join us for a celebration as we recognize our colleagues who have served the Museum for 10, 15, 20 and 25 years.

Thursday, November 18, 1999 • 3 p.m.
Rice Wildlife Research Station

The ceremony will begin promptly at 3 p.m. with a special presentation by John McCarter.
A reception will follow—beverages and hors d'oeuvre will be served.

The Field Museum Presents

A World of Words: Field Museum Literary Series

Contemporary Writers Explore the Natural and Social World

Pollination and Conservation Workshop

According to ethnobiologist and nature writer Gary Paul Nabhan, it's impossible to preserve endangered plants species unless you also preserve the plants' pollinators and the conditions that encourage plant-pollinator interactions. In this workshop, Nabhan, the cofounder of the Native Seeds grass-roots organization and director of conservation at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, will examine the degree to which pollinators are currently endangered and the measures that must be taken to preserve them. He also will demonstrate how both professional researchers and backyard gardeners can apply the results of his research.

Monday, November 8

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

$42 ($38 students/educators; $35 members)

Literary Reading with Gary Paul Nabhan

Gary Paul Nabhan has won numerous awards for his books and essays about nature, including a John Burroughs medal for nature writing and most recently a Lannan Literary Award. He also is a distinguished scholar whose research focuses on the relationship between biodiversity and cultural diversity. During this evening of literary insight into the natural world, Nabhan will read from a selection of his books and essays, which include *Cultures of Habitat, Forgotten Pollinators, The Geography of Childhood,* and *The Desert Smells Like Rain.*

Monday, November 8

6:30 p.m.

$15 ($12 students/educators, $10 members)

Additional Literary Readings in the Series

Jimmy Santiago Baca	January 25, 2000
Jhumpa Lahiri	March 21, 2000
Kathleen Norris	May 1, 2000

Please call 312.665.7400 for more information and to register.

The Field Museum salutes the people of Chicago for their long-standing, generous support of the Museum through the Chicago Park District.

This program is partially supported with funds from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

PARKING ALERT
FOR SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6, 1999

DUE TO THE WALTER PAYTON DAY MEMORIAL ON SATURDAY NOVEMBER 6, 1999, TRAFFIC AND PARKING WILL BE IMPACTED AS IT IS DURING BEARS FOOTBALL GAMES.

THE SOLDIER FIELD PARKING RATE WILL BE $7. Hang Tags and Non-Event Day Coupons will be accepted. Staff is encouraged to park at the Adler Planetarium parking lot. The public ceremony will be held on Saturday, November 6, from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. at Soldier Field.

Once the Soldier Field parking lots are full, access onto McFetridge Drive will be restricted. Parking will be available at the East Monroe Parking Garage and at the Grant Park South Garage. There will be free shuttles from the parking garages to the Museum Campus. Please be advised that due to traffic congestion, the trolleys may be delayed. We strongly urge taking public transportation.

If you have any questions, please call the Public Services Office at extension 7911.

Grant Park South Garage
25 South Michigan
312-747-2519

$11.00 Fee During the Day
$8.00 Fee after 4:00 p.m.

East Monroe Parking Garage
350 East Monroe
312-742-7644

Open 24-hours a day
$8 parking fee

Chicago Park District 312-747-2015
Soldier Field Main # 312-747-1285

Noontime Thursday Seminar features mycology associate

This Thursday's seminar will be given by John Paul Schmidt, post-doctoral associate in mycology here at The Field Museum. His title is: "Competition and Species Diversity of Unit-Restricted Macro Fungi." Because these fungi carry out their life activities on a single leaf or piece of wood there may be intense competition before the resource patch (unit) is exhausted. John Paul will discuss both field and experimental studies regarding the outcome of competition between species and its implication for species diversity patterns. Please join us for this lunchtime seminar on November 11 at 12 noon in the Zoology Classroom on the third floor.

Submitted by **Bill Burger**

The Human Resources department is moving...

On Monday, November 8, the Human Resources department will be temporarily moving to the space behind the McDonald's kitchen (the old catering kitchen), across from the entrance to the Maintenance/Shipping/Housekeeping area. In early January, we will be moving again to our newly renovated space in the ground floor administrative area (we will keep you posted).

In the temporary space, you will find **Marilyn Martinson, Shawn VanDerziel, Tracey Pilch, Patti Stratton, Carole Kasarda** (on maternity leave), **Sam Burns, Joanna Surveyor** and **Maria Burns**. Therefore, if you have any questions related to personnel issues, volunteers or payroll, please feel free to visit us in our temporary location or call us. Our telephone extensions will remain the same.

WELCOME

Speaking of Carole Kasarda, she had a baby boy on October 20 at 5:30pm. John Peter Kasarda weighed 10 lbs., 9oz. We wish mother and son all the best.

Staff changes in the marketing department

The Marketing & Communications Department is pleased to welcome **Cheryl Bardoe** to The Field Museum. Cheryl joined our staff on November 1 as Marketing Communications Coordinator. In her new position, Cheryl will be responsible for the ongoing management of the Museum's wayfinding system; updating of the Museum's recorded telephone message; writing, editing, and proofing of print materials; and various other special communications projects.

Prior to joining the Museum, Cheryl was senior account executive for Valerie Denney Communications, where she managed a range of public relations projects for cause-related not-for-profit organizations. Cheryl has a Bachelor's degree in Journalism from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. She can be reached at ext. 7141.

As we welcome Cheryl, we also bid farewell to **Nancy Petchenik**, our Director, Marketing Strategy. Nancy left the Museum on November 1 to become executive director of the Hyde Park Jewish Community Center. We wish Nancy all the best in her new position.

Submitted by **Melissa Hilton**

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Niteckis publish another book

Matthew Nitecki, curator emeritus of fossil invertebrates, Harry Mutvei, curator emeritus of fossil invertebrates in the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm, and **Doris Nitecki**, associate in the geology department at The Field Museum, are co-authors of a new book, just published by Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers. The book *Receptaculitids: A Phylogenetic Debate on a Problematic Fossil Taxon* is the sixteenth published by Matt, five in collaboration with his wife Doris.

For many years Matt Nitecki has been working on an enigmatic group of early Paleozoic fossils, the receptaculitids (recepts). Recepts are cosmopolitan marine fossils occurring almost exclusively in carbonate rocks, occasionally forming a major component of reeflike structures, and found on all continents except Antarctica. They range in age from Lower Ordovician to Permian (from about 500 to about 250 million years ago). The recent discovery of unusually well preserved recepts on the Swedish Island of Öland in the Baltic Sea offered opportunities to study the details of internal skeletons that have never before been observed.

Recept skeletons were originally composed of aragonite, an unstable form of calcium carbonate that in very old fossils is always altered by replacement. In the recepts from Öland, their unique replacement of aragonite with the phosphate mineral, fluorapatite, preserved morphology not seen in any other recepts. The authors propose that recepts possess a feature—the merom—not found in any other group of organisms living or extinct, and are thus a truly problematic group of extinct organisms. These high-level and least known fossils, whose nature and basic position in the evolutionary tree of the living world—their phylogenetic relationships—are not yet explained, offer a distinctive window into the history of early life. The search for the explanation of the recept relationships has been between two opposing hypotheses. The first placed recepts as algae, the second as sponges. The authors have not been able to find a proper taxonomic placement for these interesting fossils, and were left no choice but to set them adrift once more.

ECP staff return from Bolivian rapid assessment trip

Environmental and Conservation Programs (ECP) director **Debby Moskovits** and ECP conservation ecologists **Bill Alverson**, **Robin Foster**, and **Tom Schulenberg** recently returned from a field trip to Pando, a department in far northern (Amazonian) Bolivia. The aim of the trip was to conduct a rapid assessment of the conservation potential of two forests near the Peruvian border, in collaboration with other scientists from the Brookfield Zoo, the Colección Boliviana de Fauna, the Universidad Amazonia de Pando, New York University, and State University of New York (Stony Brook).

The team worked in two primary sites, one recently subjected to selective logging, and the other unlogged but occupied by a small population of castaña (Brazil nut) and wild rubber harvesters. On biological merits, both sites would warrant inclusion within a protected area, but while in Bolivia our team received a crash course in Bolivian politics and the economics of the logging industry. Hopes remain high that the study sites will receive some level of protection, given commitment from Bolivian and international agencies to continue negotiations with the logging company and the government in Pando. The team of scientists spoke directly with the top officials in Pando and of the Bolivian national Senate, all of whom were very supportive of our efforts.

These meetings also attracted the attention of national and local television stations and newspapers. The ECP field expedition was accompanied by Hardy Tasso, a journalist for the largest German radio network. Despite having no prior experience with camping or other field work, Hardy lived up to his name and provided great company during the trip. He was able to document virtually all aspects of our work, including the follow-up discussions with local governmental organizations. Germany and Japan are the final destinations of much of the timber that is harvested from Bolivia, and we also anticipate that his radio programs will help sensitize Germans to the toll taken by logging in Bolivia.

Submitted by **Tom Schulenberg**

Look at me, Ma, I'm dancing!

The Geology Department again turned out in force to attend the 59th Annual Meeting of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP), held in Denver October 20-23 and attended by more than 1,050 people (the largest ever).

Staff and Chicago-based associates of the department that attended were **John Flynn, John and Marianne Bolt, Lance and Terry Grande, Peter Wagner, Bill and Hedy Turnbull, Chris Brochu, Lisa Bergwall, Paul Brinkman, Matt Brown, Greg Buckley, Anne Kehoe, Mike Parrish, Bruce Schumacher, Bill Simpson, Allison Smith,** and **Connie Van Beek.** Also attending were resident graduate students **Darin Croft, Gina Wesley,** and **Robin O'Keefe.**

It was a successful conference by all accounts, and featured the first ever live band and dancing—due in no small part to the efforts of the President of the Society, our own John Flynn. Papers and posters presented this year by Field Museum authors included:

John Flynn on Madagascar expeditions, co-authored with **Bill Simpson**
Robin Whatley and FM research associates **Andy Wyss, Michael Parrish** and **David Krause**
Lance Grande (Fossil fish)
Chris Brochu (SUE's CT scan)
Bruce Schumacher (Plesiosaur phylogeny)
Darin Croft (South American herbivores)
Peter Wagner (one on Stratigraphic consistency testing, and one with **Robin O'Keefe** on phylogeny of plesiosauria)
Greg Buckley (New crocodile species found in Madagascar, co-authored with **Chris Brochu** and **Dave Krause**)

Also, Chris Brochu's work on SUE was featured as one of only four keynote papers highlighted in the SVP press conference.

Submitted by **Carter O'Brien**

New Discoveries Lecture Series Presents

Staff/volunteers may call ext. 7400 for 2 free tickets

When Worlds Collide

Hear from Timoteo Shoefoot, a member of the Yanomamö people from the Amazon rainforest in Southern Venezuela, as he discusses his life, the influences of Western civilization and the current issues facing the Yanomamö. Copies of the newly released Second Edition of *The Spirit of the Rainforest: A Yanomamö Shaman's Story* by Mark Andrew Ritchie will be available for purchase after the lecture.

Thursday, Nov. 11; 6:30 p.m.
$12 ($10 students/educators, $8 members)

November 15 is America Recycles Day! Field Museum Recycles, too!!

In honor of America Recycles Day, we will be running a series of articles in Natural News to remind and inform people about what we can all do at the Museum to improve the quality of our environment. Following the strategy simply stated as "**Reduce - Reuse - Recycle**" on a daily basis is one way to make a big difference.

A few tips on working toward an earth-friendly work environment:

Try to reduce waste. Save some trees!! Don't make that copy unless you absolutely have to. If a memo is half a page long, fit two of them on a page when making copies. Double side xerox whenever you can.

Try to reuse materials. Use the back sides of old documents for note paper when a perfect piece of paper isn't required. Reuse old file folders. **Buy recycled products.**

Please recycle! If it can't be reused and if it is recyclable, **PLEASE** make sure it gets recycled and keep it out of the garbage and, ultimately, out of the land fills.

Why bother?

A sad fact is that the United States generates more garbage than any other country. The average American generates about 1500 pounds of trash each year, creating over 200 million tons of waste in a year in the US. And 90% of our solid waste goes to land fill. As a result, we are not only running out of places to dispose of our trash, but our present methods of disposal are causing **soil, water, and air pollution.** The problems do not end with the land fill issue, either. Considering paper alone, **water, electricity and trees** can be saved by paper waste reduction, reuse and recycling.

What we can do in our workplace

The Field Museum recycling program currently makes it possible for staff and volunteers to recycle all of the following materials:

- most **paper** (exceptions include paper towels, napkins and tissues, brown paper bags, photos, carbon paper, plates, cups, and food-contaminated paper)
- **cardboard**
- **glass, cans, #s 1 and 2 plastics**
- clean **styrofoam peanuts** and **plastic bubble wrap**

In order for the program to work, we must ensure that everything is put in the right place:

Paper from the blue or black office bins is recycled in BRIGHT green totes around the building.

Cardboard boxes must be broken down and deposited in the collection place designated for your area. Please don't expect our Housekeeping staff to pick them up just anywhere.

Glass, cans and plastic are recycled in DARK green totes (also stationed around the building) and in the receptacles in the Siragusa Center. Recycling at events? Look for the large blue recycling cans used for this purpose.

Styrofoam peanuts and **bubble wrap** can be dropped off with **Mary Anne Rogers** (Div. of Fishes, ext. 7732) for reuse.

In addition to the above listed museum-wide recycling efforts, **Gale Asikin** is recycling plastic 6-pack rings from the cans that go into our vending machines and FP&O recycles light fixture ballast and light bulbs (see article elsewhere in this issue).

In the Following Weeks: Details about recycling in the Museum, a complete list of papers that can and cannot be recycled, and a list of the staff involved in making this program happen.

Submitted bythe Recycling Committee